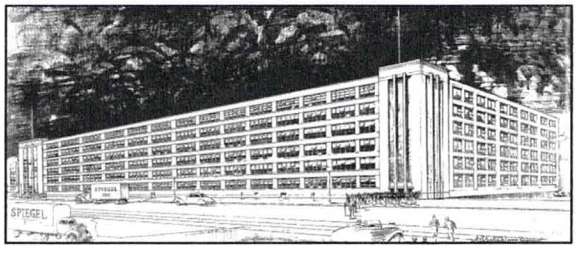
LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



Spiegel Administration Building

1038 West 35th Street

Preliminary and Final Landmark Recommendation adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, November 4, 2010

City of Chicago
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning
Patricia A. Scudiero, Commissioner

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose ten members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual building, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning, 33 North LaSalle Street, Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-2958) TTY; (312-744-9140) fax, web site: www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks

This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within City Council's final landmark designation ordinance should be regarded as final.

SPIEGEL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

1038 West 35th Street

Built: **1936 (Original Two-Story Building)**
1941-42 (Additional Four Floors)

Architects/
Engineers: **Battey & Kipp (1936)**
A. Epstein (1941-42)

The Spiegel Administration Building, located at 1038 West 35th Street in Chicago's Bridgeport neighborhood, is a six-story Art Moderne-style industrial structure of reinforced concrete and brick that served as the main administrative headquarters for Spiegel, Inc., a nationally-known mail-order house that was founded in Chicago in 1907 by German immigrant Joseph Spiegel. The building is the best-remaining structure from the once-substantial complex of warehouses, administrative and office buildings that served as the center of one of the nation's most innovative and successful mail-order businesses from its founding in 1907 until the early 1990s.

The building is also one of the best remaining industrial structures within the original Central Manufacturing District (CMD), one of the first planned industrial developments in the United States and once-home to such prominent manufacturing companies as the William Wrigley, Jr. Company, Ford Motor Company, United (Rexall) Drug Company, the Pullman Couch Company, Pacific Lumber Company, and Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company.

Spiegel was one of the first and largest tenants within the original CMD.

The Spiegel Administration Building is an outstanding example of an Art Moderne-style industrial loft building utilizing flat-slab construction methods. Art Moderne was an architectural style that was popular in the 1930s and known for its "streamlined" appearance, often accented with glass block, a new building material in the 1930s. Although designed specifically for use as offices to support Spiegel's mail-order activities, the building exemplifies the advantages of loft construction, which provided universal spaces that could be configured to accommodate a variety of uses. The building was constructed in two phases, with the initial two-story structure designed by the engineering firm of Battey & Kipp, and the subsequent four-story addition completed by the architecture and engineering firm of A. Epstein.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

The Spiegel Administration Building is a six-story, flat-roofed industrial structure of brick and concrete set on a raised concrete foundation and built using flat-slab construction methods. The primary façade along West 35th Street is 15 bays long and features continuous dark red brick spandrels in running bond that project slightly from the wall plane. Recessed brick piers separate banks of large multi-light steel windows set on continuous concrete sills.

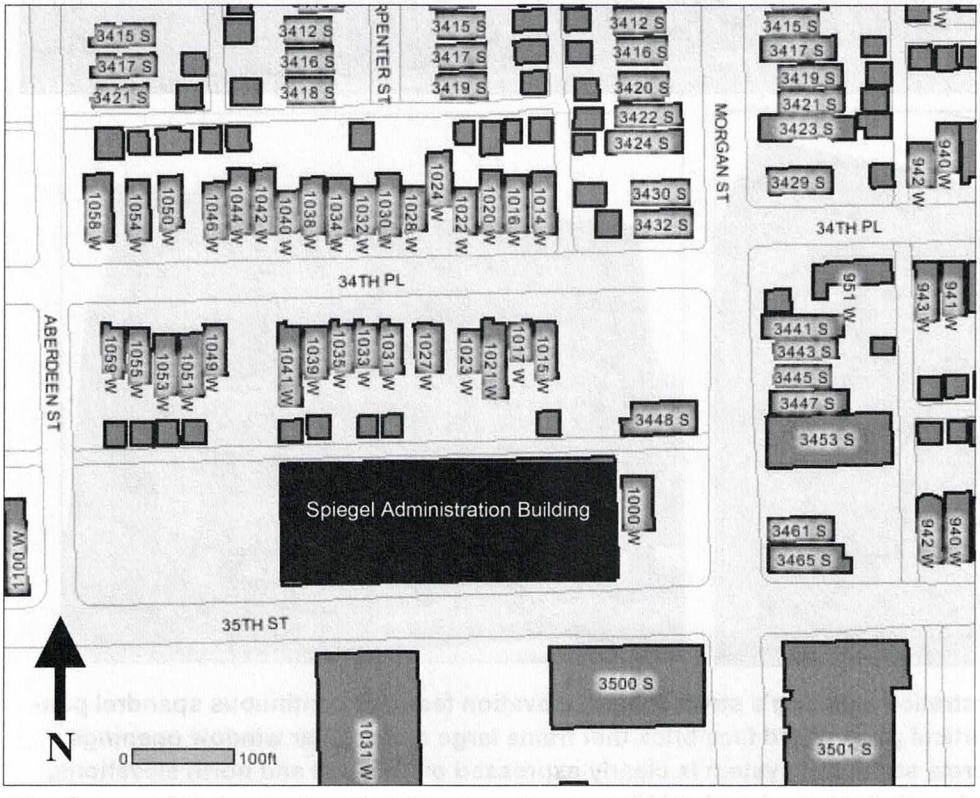
Two visually-prominent corner stair towers, located on the southeast and southwest corners of the building, are major architectural elements on the 35th Street elevation. The towers feature repeating vertical bands of glass block that rise from the middle of the raised first floor to the top of the sixth floor and are separated by projecting square brick columns that begin at the concrete base of the building and terminate with squared concrete capitals. The towers are topped with simple concrete copings.

The primary entrances to the building are located on the south sides of these stair towers. The southeast entry consists of two single doorways flanking a central window of glass blocks; the southwest entry contains three separate doorways. "Spiegel, Inc." is formed into the concrete lintels above the entryways. The vertical emphasis of these corner towers balances the strong horizontality of the main façade.

Typical of flat-slab construction, the building's interiors are open spaces supported by flared concrete columns. Dropped ceilings have been installed on several floors, partially obscuring the flared capitals.

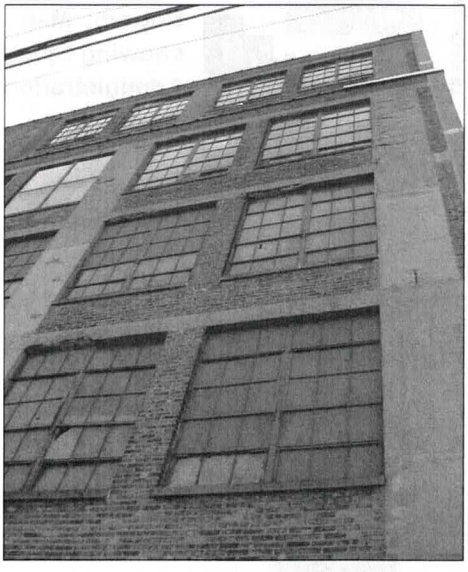
Development History

The Spiegel Administration Building was constructed in two phases and, when completed, allowed the company to consolidate its scattered office and administration facilities into one building. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* announced the plans for a new Spiegel Administration Building on August 15, 1936, noting that work would begin the following Monday on a $250,000 reinforced concrete loft building that would "double the present office capacity of the company." On September 11, 1936, a building permit was issued for a two-story building, with engineers Battey & Kipp listed as the architect of record and Campbell, Lowrie, & Lautermilch as the general contractor.



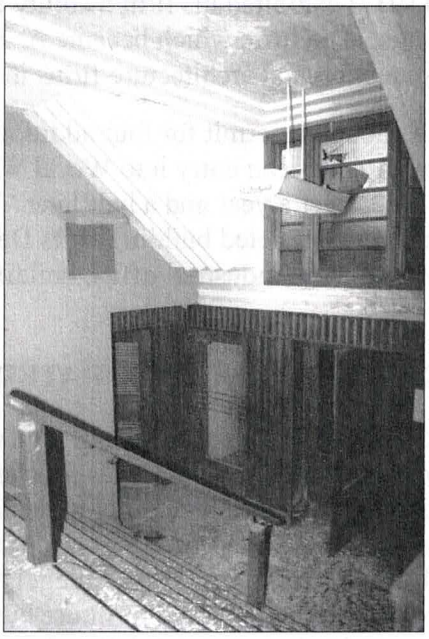
Top: South and east elevations, looking west. Bottom: Map showing Spiegel Administration Building.

The Spiegel Administration Building is a six-story reinforced concrete and masonry industrial loft building that served as the main administration building for the mail-order retailer Spiegel, Inc. The building, located at 1038 West 35th Street in the Bridgeport community, was constructed in two phases in 1936 and 1941-1942.



The Spiegel Administration Building's street (south) elevation features continuous spandrel panels and recessed vertical piers of red face brick that frame large rectangular window openings. The building's concrete structural system is clearly expressed on the east and north elevations, which house original multi-light steel sash windows.

Top: West 35th Street elevation, looking northwest. Bottom left: Detail of north elevation. Bottom right: East elevation.



Typical of early-twentieth century industrial loft buildings, the Spiegel Administration Building features open interior spaces with exposed structural elements and few permanent partition walls.

Top: Typical view of the building's open interior spaces. Bottom left: Interior of southeast corner stair. Bottom right: Entrance lobby at southwest corner stair.

Construction progressed smoothly through the fall, and the building was ready for occupancy by January of 1937. Utilizing their skills as engineers, Battey & Kipp designed the foundation of the building to permit the seamless future addition of four additional floors to the building. In its February 1937 issue, the *Central Manufacturing District Magazine* approvingly called the new office building a "handsome modern structure" that "forms a noteworthy addition to the District."

Paul Battey received his degree in engineering from the University of Kansas in 1899, and Alfred R. Kipp, a native of Indiana, received his engineering degree from Purdue University in 1895. By the mid-1920s, the two men had formed a successful partnership as Battey & Kipp, Inc., specializing in the design of industrial buildings. Battey & Kipp designed power plants, railroad facilities, and industrial structures throughout the Midwest during the 1920s and 1930s, including the Campbell Soup Company plant at 2550 West 35th Street (1927, addition in 1934), the Union Tank Car Company paint shop in Hammond, Indiana (1935), and the Union Station Company heating plant between Taylor Street and Roosevelt Road (1931).

In 1941, architect Abraham Epstein was hired by Spiegel to design the planned four-story addition to the building. Abraham Epstein, a Russian immigrant who received his degree in engineering from the University of Illinois in 1911, served as consulting architect for the Union Stockyards and the Central Manufacturing District in Chicago from 1921 until his death in 1958. Epstein's designs for the Union Stockyard's International Amphitheater (1934) and the Casper Tin Plate Company's new plant in the Central Manufacturing District's Crawford tract (1937) exhibited his firm's ability to integrate streamlined design elements into industrial buildings. The firm, which became A. Epstein & Sons in 1946, remains today one of the largest engineering and architecture firms in the world.

Although a permit for four additional floors was filed on May 23, 1941, construction stalled with American entry into World War II, and the building was not completed until November 1942, over a year and a half later. The *Central Manufacturing District Magazine* featured the newly completed building in its December 1942 issue and called it "a fine example of the modern trend in industrial office buildings."

SPIEGEL, INCORPORATED

Spiegel, Incorporated, one of the largest and most successful mail-order companies in the world during the 20th century, was founded in 1865 by Joseph Spiegel, the son of a German rabbi who immigrated with his family to the United States in 1848. Spiegel fought for the Union during the Civil War and spent the last few months of the war in a Confederate prison camp in Texas. Upon his release in 1865, Spiegel moved to Chicago to join his brother-in-law, Henry Liebenstein, in the wholesale furniture business. With Liebenstein's help, Joseph Spiegel opened a small furniture store, J. Spiegel and Company, on Wabash Avenue. By 1870, Spiegel married and had settled into a comfortable home on Prairie Avenue.

Although Spiegel lost his fledgling business in the Chicago Fire in 1871, he rebuilt quickly on Wabash Avenue with the financial assistant of a new partner, Jacob Cahn, and was able to profit from the disaster, as thousands of homeowners rebuilt and furnished their new homes. Cahn retired in 1879, and Spiegel continued to manage the business successfully on his own. In

1885, he began running advertisements in the Chicago newspapers and in 1886 moved the company to a larger building on State Street.

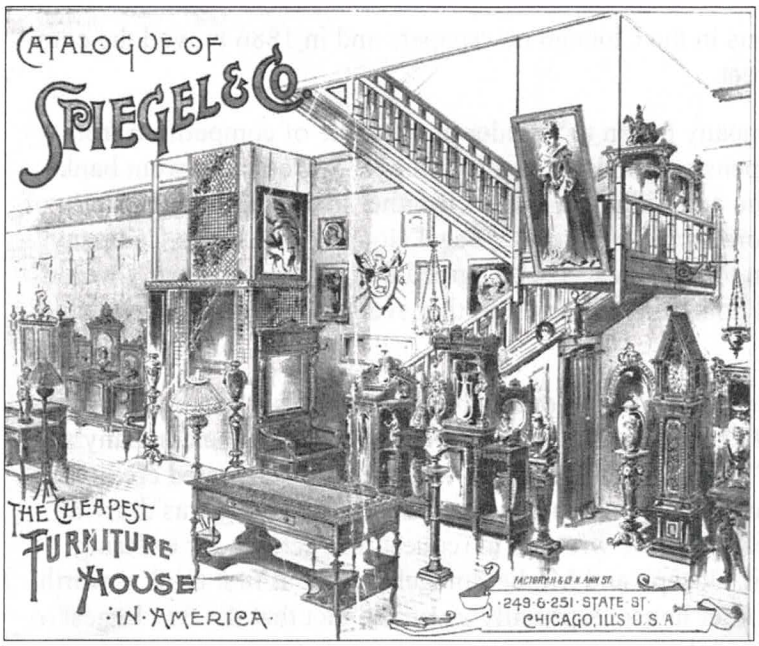
By the early 1890s, however, the company began to founder in the wake of competition from discount furniture stores selling inexpensive goods on credit. Spiegel & Company went bankrupt in 1892, but Joseph's sons, Modie and Sidney, urged their father to try again. In January of 1893, Joseph and Modie filed a corporate charter for the Spiegel House Furnishings Company of Chicago. In a reluctant concession to the times, Joseph agreed that the new company would sell only low- and moderately-priced home furnishings, and that every item would be available for purchase on an installment plan.

The decision to offer financing proved to be a sound one. The business was a success, and the first Spiegel branch store opened at 48th Street and Ashland Avenue in 1898. The company also unveiled a new advertising slogan—"We Trust the People!"—that openly celebrated credit merchandising. By the early 1900s, the company's extensive newspaper advertising was drawing interest from outside Chicago, and many people wrote in to request instructions for ordering Spiegel merchandise through the mail. Joseph and Modie Spiegel did not at first think it worth the effort and cost to operate a mail-order house, especially given the fact that the two largest and most successful mail-order giants in the country—Sears, Roebuck & Company and Montgomery Ward—were already operating within the city. However, Joseph's third son, Arthur, was convinced that Spiegel's liberal credit policies could give the company an edge in the mail-order market. As James Cornell, Jr. observed in *The People Get the Credit: The First One Hundred Years of the Spiegel Story*, many of the letters that the company received "were not particularly ecstatic about Spiegel merchandise. It was credit that these homeowners wanted."

In an effort to respond to customer demand, Spiegel Home Furnishing established a mail-order division in 1905 to serve an area within a 100-mile radius of Chicago, and became the first retail establishment to offer installment credit for mail-order items. Arthur Spiegel, who spearheaded the new endeavor, cleverly adapted the company's motto, "We Trust the People!", to read "We Trust the People—Everywhere!" The policy was wildly successful, but the family-owned company, overwhelmed by the response, was threatened with the prospect of becoming a victim of its own success. Rather than sell company stock to finance an expansion of their mail-order business, and risk losing control of the company, the Spiegel family allied with May, Stern and Company, which operated a nationwide chain of furniture stores. In 1906, the mail-order operation of Spiegel, May, Stern and Company, was incorporated and Arthur Spiegel was named president of the new company. In its first year of business, Spiegel, May, Stern and Company generated mail-order sales totaling nearly $1 million.

Flush with the early success of its foray into the mail-order business and optimistic about the new company's prospects, in 1907 the management of Spiegel, May, Stern and Company decided that constructing a separate facility would allow the company to create an efficient mail-order system and establish its own physical identity. After careful consideration, the company purchased land on 35th Street just west of Morgan Street, in the newly established Central Manufacturing District (CMD).

Spiegel was one of the first companies to move its operations into the CMD's original east tract, and would eventually become the largest single tenant in the CMD, with an aggregate of over 2,500,000 square feet of space in eleven buildings (some of which were initially built for other



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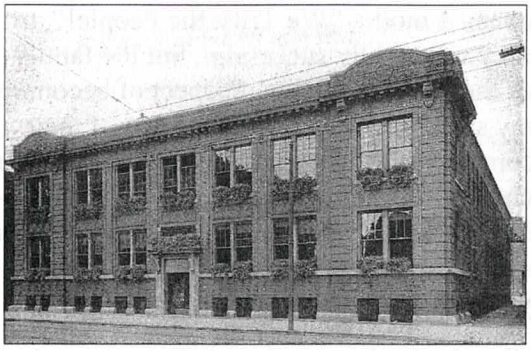
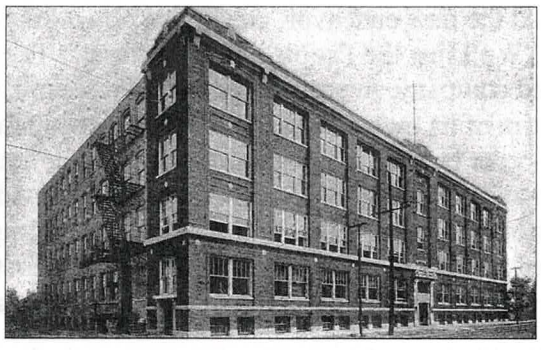




Spiegel, Incorporated, one of the largest and most successful mail-order companies in the world during the 20th century, was founded as a furniture and home goods supplier in 1865 by German immigrant Joseph Spiegel. The company formed a mail-order division, known as Spiegel, May, Stern and Company, in 1905. The company's liberal credit policies gave it an edge in the burgeoning mail-order market. By the mid-20th century, Spiegel was the third largest mail-order retailer in the country.

Top left and right: Early advertisements for the Spiegel company, dating from the 1890s and early 1900s. Middle: Letterhead for Spiegel, May, Stern and Company, circa 1911. Bottom left: Spiegel's initial success in the mail-order business led the company to construct its first buildings in the Central Manufacturing District—a two-story office building (1905, demolished) and a four-story warehouse building (1911, demolished).

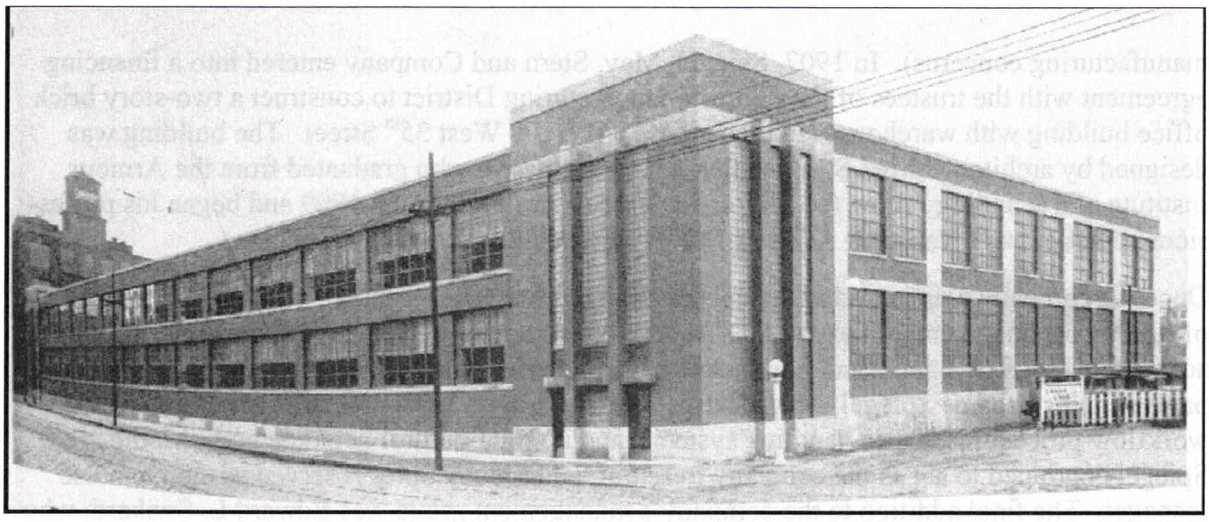
manufacturing concerns). In 1907, Spiegel, May, Stern and Company entered into a financing agreement with the trustees of the Central Manufacturing District to construct a two-story brick office building with warehouses in the rear at 1061-1100 West 35th Street. The building was designed by architect Alfred S. Alschuler, a Chicago native who graduated from the Armour Institute of Technology (now the Illinois Institute of Technology) in 1899 and began his professional practice with Dankmar Adler in 1899. (This building is no longer extant.)

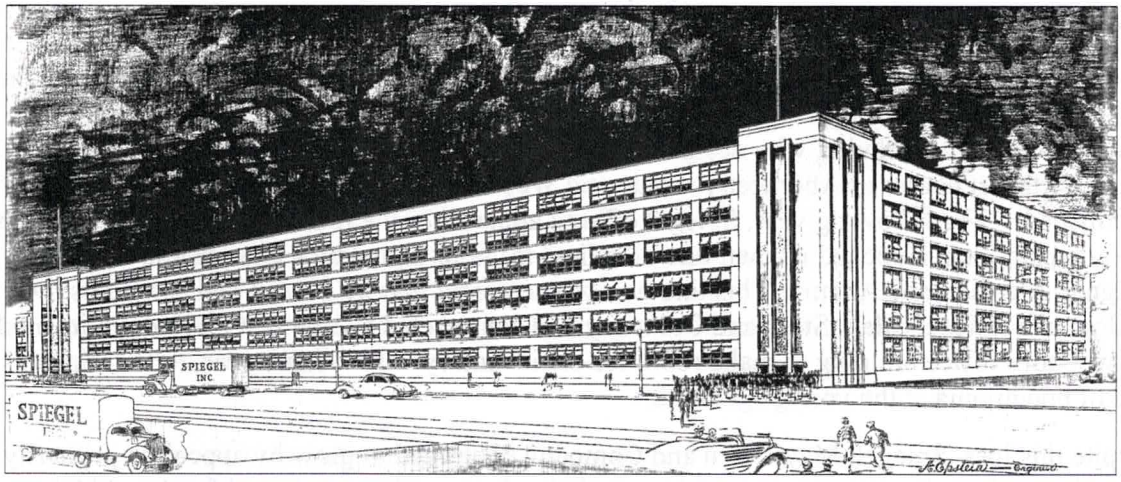
Once the company was settled in its new location, Arthur Spiegel turned to the immediate task of finding capable men with experience in mail-order to join the firm. He succeeded in luring accountant Houston Landis and junior executive Frederick Innes from Sears, Roebuck & Company. Landis became Spiegel, May, Stern's office manager; Innes was brought in to develop workflow procedures, paper-handling systems, and internal-control bookkeeping. Modie Spiegel continued to act as the company treasurer, and Sidney Spiegel served as merchandise manager. The final addition to the company's management group was Edward L. Swikard, who was brought on as Spiegel's mail-order advertiser.

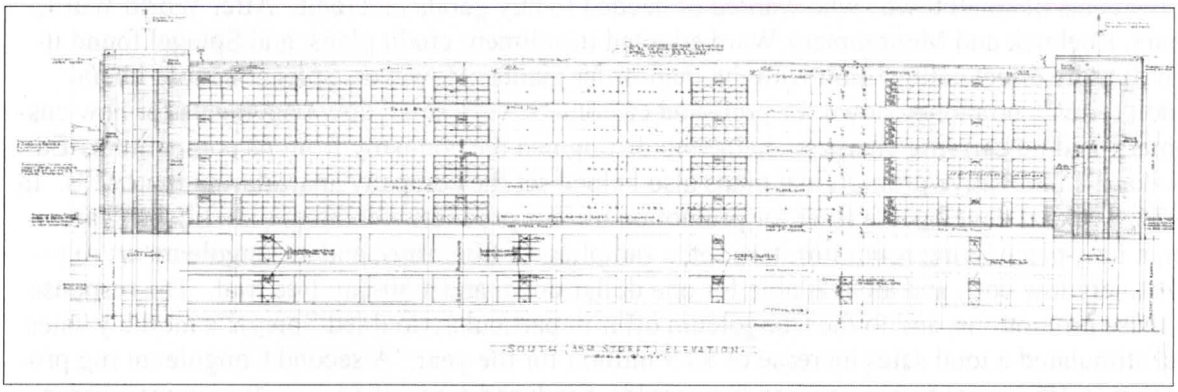
By 1910, the company had begun to diversify its product lines, branching into inexpensive, factory-manufactured clothing. To accommodate these new products, Spiegel, May, Stern again brought in Alfred Alschuler, who designed a four-story brick warehouse that was constructed on the northeast corner of Aberdeen Avenue and West 35th Street and completed in 1911 (now demolished). The following year, Spiegel offered apparel for the first time through its catalogs. The company then launched its own line of ladies' fashions styled by a charismatic fictional designer, Martha Lane Adams. This line was so successful that by 1916 it had earned its own catalog, and Spiegel, May, Stern and Company had constructed a large rear addition to its modest two-story office building to make room for the inventory. That same year, Arthur Spiegel died of pneumonia at the young age of 32.

Despite this loss, Spiegel, May, Stern and Company continued to grow by appealing primarily to residents of small towns who wanted or needed to buy goods on credit. After World War I, Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward adopted installment credit plans, and Spiegel found itself in more direct competition with the mail-order giants. However, Spiegel's more liberal credit terms—no money down for preferred customers, very small down payments for new customers, and no carrying charges—helped to distinguish the company from its competitors. Ed Swikard's innovative promotional plans also helped set the company apart during the 1920s. In 1923, Swikard developed a flyer for promotion of four products—an aluminum kitchenware set, a four-piece living room furniture set, a sampling of fiber rugs, and a Congoleum art rug—all at very low cost, and all available for one dollar down and a 30-day free trial. The response to these promotions, and to the Congoleum offer in particular, doubled Spiegel's monthly sales and stimulated a total sales increase of $3.9 million for the year. A second Congoleum rug promotion in 1926, sent to nine million households, produced a rise of $4.7 million in mail-order sales.

Although Spiegel's total volume of sales would never approach that of Sears, Roebuck or Montgomery Ward, the company was doing well, and was quickly increasing its presence in the mail-order market. A study of mail-order sales between 1919 and 1929 showed that, although sales in general declined by $89 million, Spiegel, May, Stern's mail-order sales increased by 204 percent. In 1928, the company went public, and in 1929 the Spiegel family began liquidat-

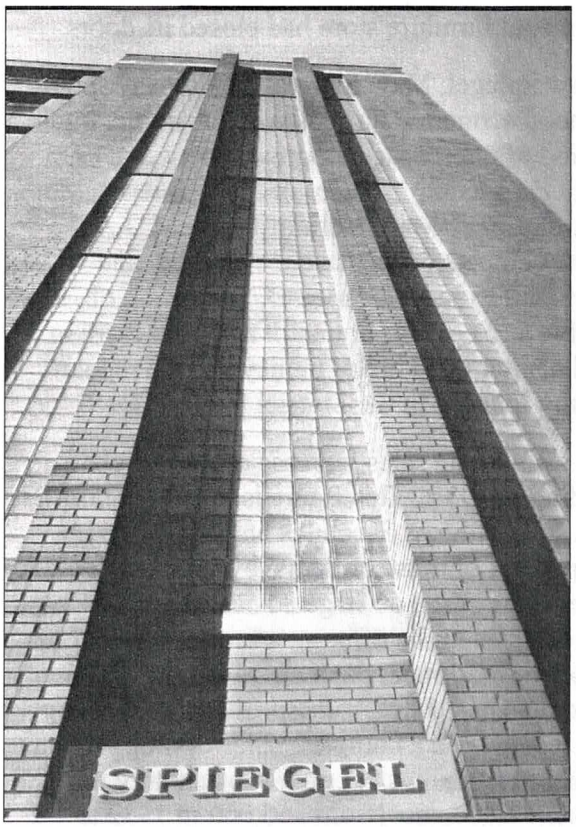




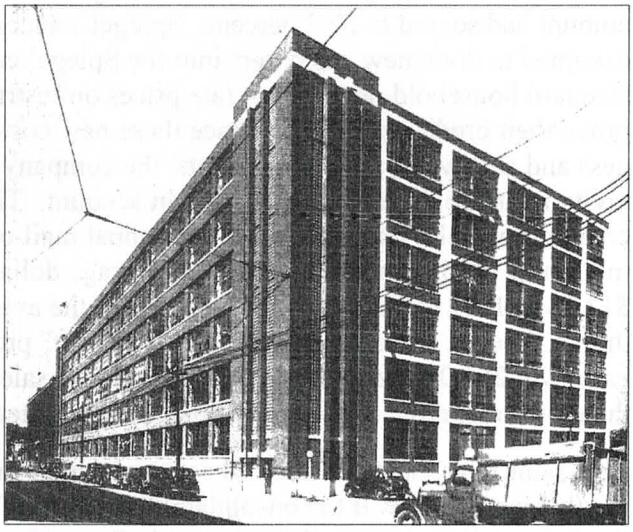


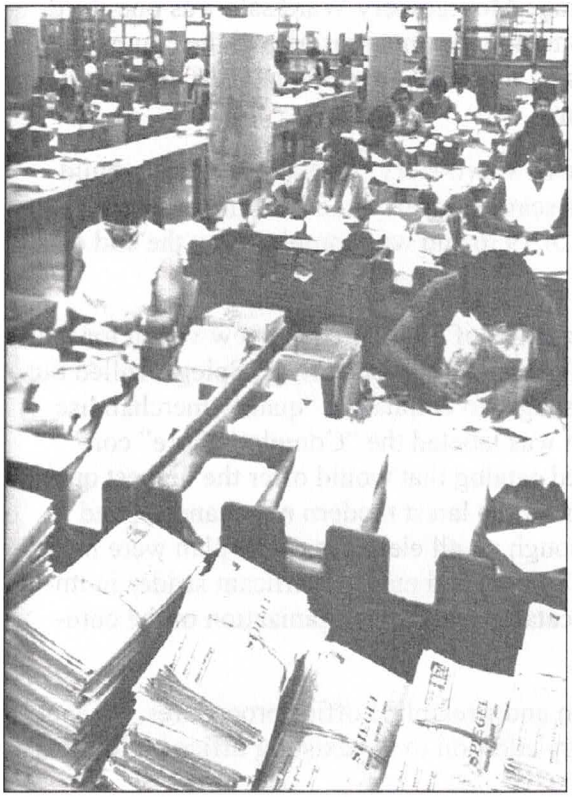
Unlike many businesses, Spiegel continued to thrive through the Great Depression of the 1930s. Between 1932 and 1937, the company increased its annual sales by 790 percent. In 1936, the company commissioned engineers Battey & Kipp to construct a two-story office building on 35th Street in the Central Manufacturing District. The building was completed in 1937 and was a reflection of the company's continued success. In 1941, four additional floors were added based on designs by architect and engineer Abraham Epstein.

Top: The building as completed in 1937, prior to the added upper floors. Middle: Rendering of building with additions by A. Epstein, 1941. Bottom: Elevation drawing by A. Epstein, 1941.



Adding four stories to a two-story building for Spiegel, Inc., Chicago. Engineer, A. Epstein, Chicago; Contractor, Campbell-Lowrie-Lautermilch Corp., Chicago





The four-story addition to the 1937 office building allowed Spiegel to consolidate all of its administrative operations into a single building. By the 1960s, employees working in the Spiegel Administration Building were processing over a ton of letters and order requests every day.

Clockwise from top left: View of corner stair tower in 1950; Epstein's four-story addition in progress, 1941; the building as it stood in 1942; and employees processing orders in the Spiegel Administration Building in 1950.

ing its retail furniture business. By 1932, the last Spiegel furniture store had closed its doors.

Although the early years of the Great Depression saw Spiegel, May, Stern and Company scrambling to recover from losses associated with the general economic turndown and from the liquidation of its retail operations, Spiegel entered a period of unprecedented growth between 1933 and 1937. The company's turnaround was primarily the accomplishment of M. J. Spiegel, Modie Spiegel's oldest son, who took over leadership of Spiegel, May, Stern in 1933. M. J., who was only thirty-two when he became president of the company, was driven, energetic, and willing to work hard. As Spiegel historians Orange A. Smalley and Frederick D. Sturdivant observed, "when Montgomery Ward was in deep trouble and needed 'brains' it acquired them in Sewell L. Avery for $100,000 a year....Spiegel had neither this kind of money nor the reputation needed to attract such talent. Instead the company found it in the Spiegel family."

Under M. J.'s leadership, the company achieved an astounding sales increase of 790 percent over the five year period beginning in 1932 and ending in 1937. This figure is even more impressive when compared to the relative increases in sales at Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward. In 1932, Spiegel sales amounted to just 6.1 percent of those of Sears; by 1937, the amount had soared to 27.7 percent. Spiegel's success was based on targeted outreach that was designed to draw new customers into the Spiegel credit system by offering a limited number of standard household items at cut rate prices on restricted installment payment plan that would prove their credit worthiness. Once these new customers had successfully proven their willingness and ability to pay their accounts, the company would send a complete sales catalog with an invitation to apply for a standard credit account. These campaigns not only substantially increased Spiegel's total number of individual mail-order customers (from 360,000 in 1932 to 1.2 million in 1936), it also increased the average dollar amount of those customers' orders, from $13.28 in 1932 to $15.12 in 1935. In 1934, the average Montgomery Ward sale was one-third that of Spiegel. A series of successful "add-on" promotional campaigns helped the company to gain over 250,000 new customers and increase sales by over $10.4 million in 1936, making it the most prosperous year yet for Spiegel, May, Stern.

That same year, Spiegel financed construction of the new two-story Art Moderne office building that would allow it to consolidate the company's scattered office and administration facilities into as single space. Work began in September of 1936 and was completed by the end of the year.

The years between 1938 and 1943 saw the implementation of M.J. Spiegel's new vision for the company. Following a complete reorganization of the company's executives, Spiegel rolled out an ambitious five year plan in January of 1939 that sought to emphasize "quality merchandise for quality customers." The plan was based on what was labeled the "Complete Store" concept—the development of an expanded and improved catalog that would offer the highest quality merchandise for any given price, would always have the latest modern merchandise, and would carry merchandise under a brand name. Although no all elements of the plan were in place at the end of 1942, there was no question that Spiegel had made significant strides in improving merchandise quality, the appearance of the catalogs, and the organization of the company as a whole between 1937 and 1942.

In an effort to further improve company organization and streamline office procedures, Spiegel hired Abraham Epstein in 1941 to build the four-story addition to the existing office building at

1038 West 35th Street. Epstein, who had succeeded S. Scott Joy in 1921 as the Central Manufacturing District's preferred architect, adhered closely to the original design by Battey & Kipp, extending the corner towers and maintaining the scale, massing, and materials of the existing structure. The newly expanded building allowed Spiegel to consolidate all of its offices, which had previously been scattered among numerous warehouses, into a single building. The building served as a clearinghouse for the enormous volumes of mail that the company received every day. By the 1960s, employees working in the building were processing over a ton of letters and order requests every day.

The onset of World War II created product and labor shortages for Spiegel, and in 1942, after the U. S. government officially discouraged Americans from buying on credit, Spiegel discontinued its popular "no charge for credit" policy. By the end of 1943, the move had cost the company $3.8 million. In an effort to curtail the decline in sales, Spiegel again entered the retail market, hoping to mimic the recent success of Sears and Montgomery Ward. By 1950, Spiegel was operating over 160 retail stores that specialized in a wide range of products, including clothing, furniture, auto supplies, sporting goods, and appliances. Although the retail venture was initially modestly successful, the operation and maintenance costs soon began to weigh heavily on the company, and by 1954 Spiegel had sold off most of its retail stores and turned its primary focus again to mail-order. The company returned to its roots by unveiling a new liberal credit plan. Called the Budget Power Plan, it offered customers lines of credit as high as $1000 with very low monthly payments.

By 1965, when the Spiegel family sold the business to the Beneficial Finance Company, Spiegel, Inc. had reached more than $300 million in annual sales and nearly two million people had Spiegel credit accounts. Spiegel continued to use the buildings along West 35th Street in the Central Manufacturing District, including the Spiegel Administration Building at 1038 West 35th Street, as a distribution facility until 1993, when the company moved its headquarters to Ohio.

Spiegel occupied eleven buildings in the CMD at the peak of its success in the 1950s. In addition to the Spiegel Administration Building and four other, earlier office and warehouse buildings that were purpose-built by the company between 1911 and 1915, the company also expanded into the large Albert Pick Co. Building at 35th Street and the river. The only buildings constructed by Spiegel that remain from the original complex are the 1907 and circa 1915 warehouse buildings at 1061 West 35th Street (which originally stood behind the now-demolished 1907 office building), and the Spiegel Administration Building at 1038 West 35th Street. Of these, the Spiegel Administration Building best exemplifies the history of Spiegel as an important mail-order company.

MAIL-ORDER HOUSES IN CHICAGO

By the time Spiegel entered the mail-order market in 1905, Chicago was already the major center for mail-order retailers in the United States. Mail-order houses were a distinctly American retailing innovation that developed in response to the needs of a primarily rural citizenry. Before the 1920s, a majority of Americans lived in rural settings and had limited access to consumer goods. Country stores offered small inventories of overpriced products—by the 1870s, a

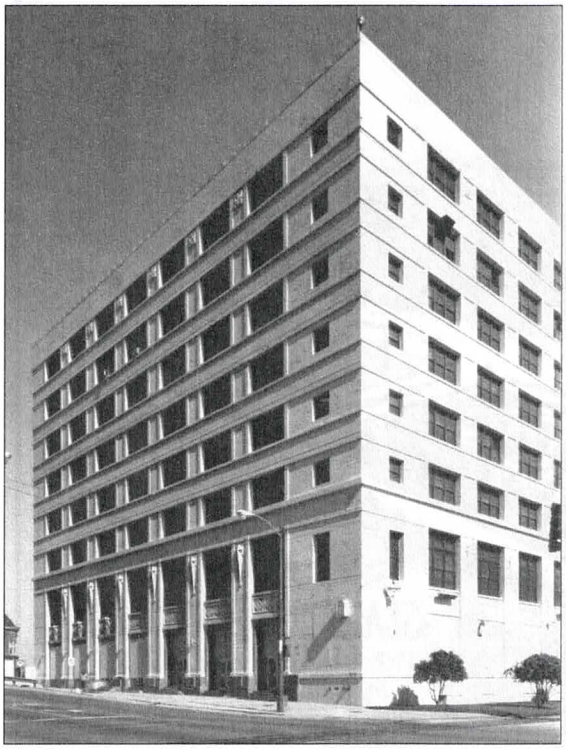
widespread animus against such local merchants had spurred attempts by agrarian organizations and farmers to avoid the local middlemen in the retail trade.

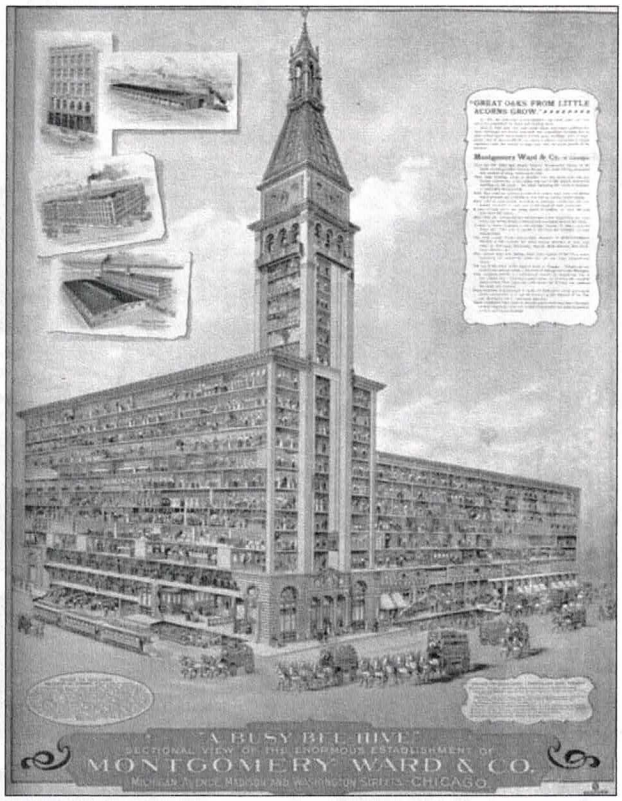
Chicago's central location and its network of railroads made the city a logical choice for the mail-order trade. By the turn of the century, Chicago had emerged as the most important railroad center in the country, with more lines of track radiating in more directions than any other city. Initially, the system of railroads that connected the city to the wheat fields of northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin, and to the Midwest cities of Detroit, Cleveland, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Kansas City, Omaha, and St. Paul, had served to make Chicago the central point of the grain, livestock, and meat packing industries. Early mail-order retailers recognized that the system of rail lines that brought grain and livestock into Chicago for processing could also be used as a distribution system that delivered finished goods cheaply and efficiently to those same far-flung farming communities. Moreover, Chicago's reputation as a major manufacturing center meant that many of the goods sold by mail-order retailers—from candy to furniture—were made by Chicago companies.

The first large retailer to use catalogs as its primary promotional tool and to sell directly to the rural consumer was Chicago-based Montgomery Ward. Aaron Montgomery Ward, a New Jersey native, came to Chicago in 1866. Ward worked for several years with the large dry-goods business of Field, Palmer, & Leiter (which would later become Marshall Field & Co.), promoting and selling products in rural areas. In 1872, Ward struck out on his own with an innovative mail-order business that marketed and sold items directly to rural consumers. Key to the company's success was the support of the Patrons of Husbandry, a national farmer's organization also known as "the Grange." Montgomery Ward partnered with the Illinois chapter and several other local chapters of the Grange throughout the Midwest to serve as the organization's official supply house, giving the company direct access to the organization's large mailing lists and an instant endorsement from thousands of farmers.

Ward's first catalog in August 1872 was a single-sheet price list of 163 items; by the end of 1874, the catalog had grown to over 100 pages with over 25,000 items ranging from clothing to steam engines. In 1875, the company instituted an unprecedented policy that promised "satisfaction guaranteed or your money back," which proved popular with customers. By the early 1900s, Wards employed over 7,000 men and women in Chicago and was selling tens of millions of dollars in goods annually. The Montgomery Ward & Co. Catalog House at 600-618 West Chicago Avenue (1907-1908) is a National Historic Landmark (with the adjacent Administrative Building) and an individually-designated Chicago Landmark. The Montgomery Ward Building at 6 North Michigan Avenue, designed by Richard E. Schmidt and begun in 1899, is located within the Historic Michigan Boulevard Chicago Landmark District.

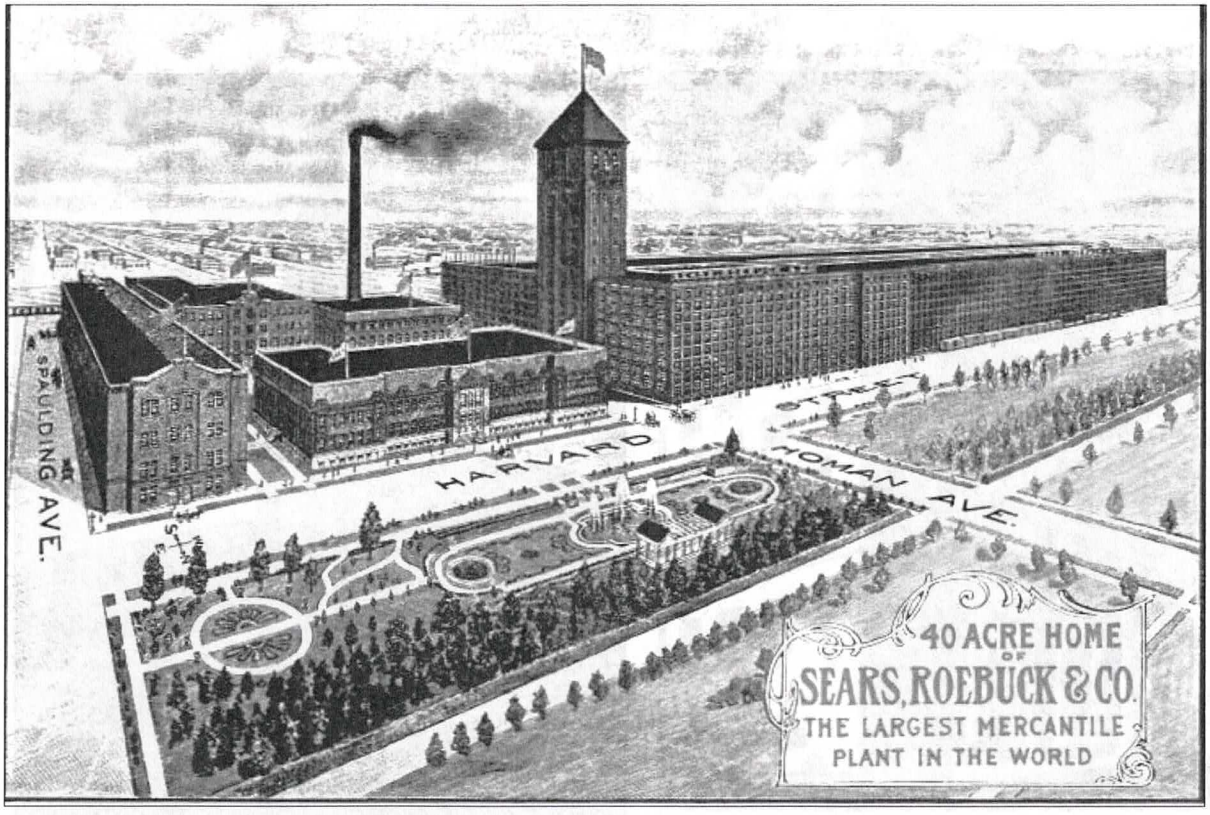
Even more astonishing than the rapid growth of Montgomery Ward was the rise of another Chicago-based firm, Sears, Roebuck & Co. The firm was the creation of a Minnesotan named Richard W. Sears, who got his start in the 1880s by selling watches through the mail with partner Alvah C. Roebuck, a watch repairman. In 1885, Sears established a general mail-order company that closely mimicked Montgomery Ward's successful business plan. Like Ward, Sears issued giant catalogs with a wide range of goods and marketed primarily to rural consumers. Sears also entered the mail-order market just as major postal reforms were drastically reducing the cost of bulk mailings and rural parcel delivery across the nation. After only a few years in




"GREAT OAKS FROM LITTLE ACORNS GROW"
A BUSY BEE HIVE
SECTIONAL VIEW OF THE ENORMOUS ESTABLISHMENT OF
MONTGOMERY WARD & CO.
MICHIGAN AVENUE, MADISON AND WASHINGTON STREETS, CHICAGO

By the time Spiegel entered the mail-order business in 1905, Chicago, with its central location, network of railroads, and well-established manufacturing operations, had already become the country's center for mail-order retail. The first large-scale mail-order business in the country was founded in Chicago in 1872 by Aaron Montgomery Ward. By the early 1900s, Montgomery Ward & Company employed over 7,000 men and women in Chicago and was selling tens of millions of dollars in goods across the country annually.

Top left: Montgomery Ward & Company's Catalog Plant at 600 West Chicago Avenue, completed in 1907-1908 (a designated Chicago Landmark); Bottom left: Aaron Montgomery Ward; Top right: Cutaway view of the Montgomery Ward & Company Building at 6 North Michigan Avenue, located in the Historic Michigan Boulevard Chicago Landmark District.



Even more successful than Montgomery Ward was another Chicago-based mail-order retailer, Sears, Roebuck & Co. Sears issued giant catalogs with a wide range of goods marketed primarily to rural consumers. After only a few years in operation, Sears surpassed Ward as the nation's leading mail-order company. By 1905, the year Spiegel began its mail-order operation, Sears had about nine thousand employees and boasted annual sales of almost $50 million.

Top: The Sears, Roebuck & Co. complex in the North Lawndale neighborhood, constructed in 1905. Bottom left: Sears, Roebuck & Co. catalog, 1897. Bottom right: View of the Sears Administration Building, a designated Chicago Landmark.

operation, Sears surpassed Ward as the nation's leading mail-order company. By 1905, Sears had about nine thousand employees and boasted annual sales of almost $50 million.

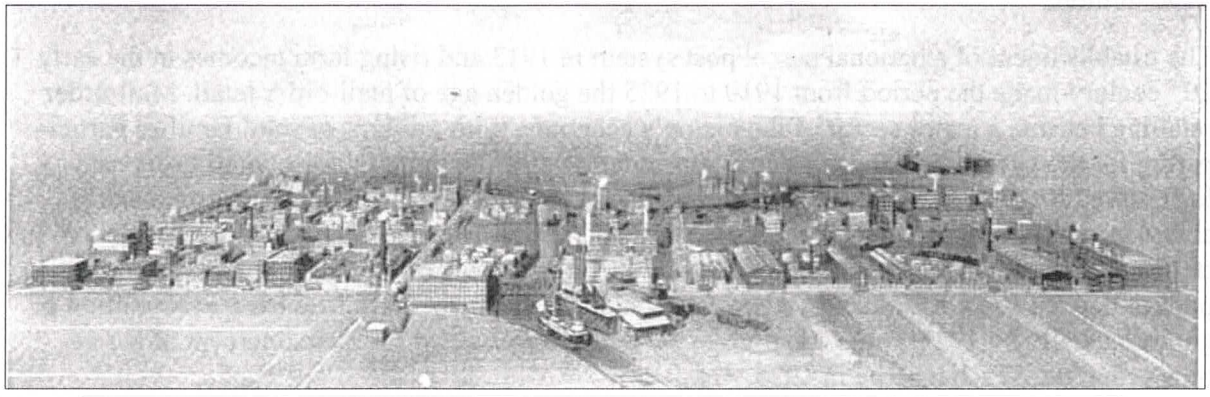
That year, Sears also began construction on a massive centralized manufacturing complex on Chicago's west side—complete with a catalog printing plant and its own power house— that would remain the company's national headquarters until the 1970s. The complex was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1978; the Sears Administration Building within the complex is also an individual Chicago Landmark. By 1914, Sears had established regional distribution branches in Dallas and Seattle, and the company's annual mail-order sales had surpassed $100 million.

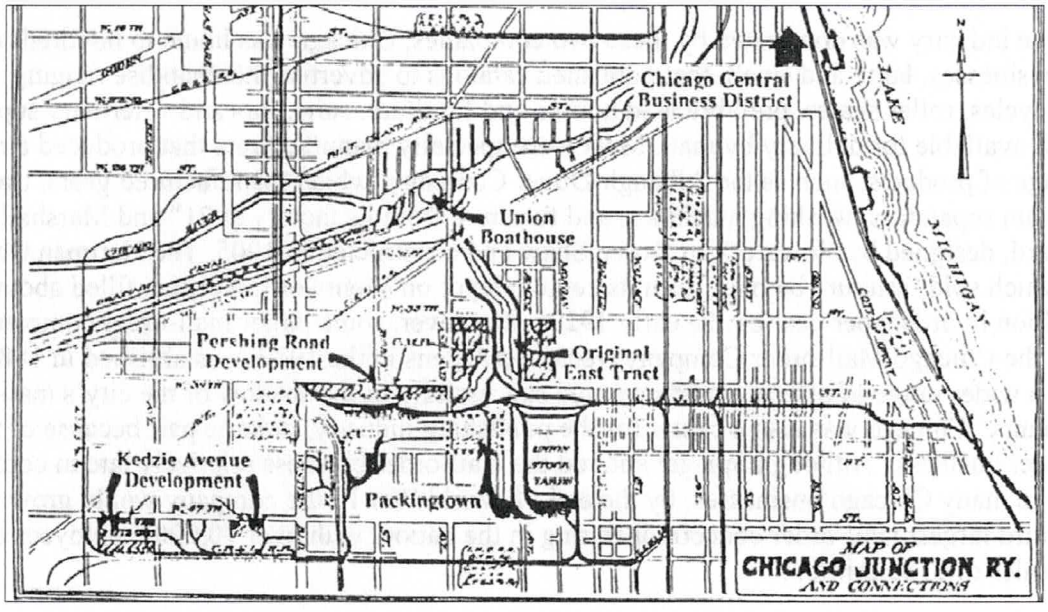
The establishment of a national parcel post system in 1913 and rising farm incomes in the early 20th century made the period from 1910 to 1925 the golden age of mail-order retail. Mail-order retailing became a major sector of the nation's economy, with millions of rural families participating for the first time in the emerging consumer culture. To these families, mail-order catalogs served not only as a marketing tool, but also as "school readers, almanacs, symbols of abundance and progress, and objects of fantasy and desire." For the companies, mail-order retailing proved to be an efficient and extremely lucrative means of reaching an almost limitless pool of new customers. Taken together, Sears and Montgomery Ward sold over $400 million of goods annually by 1925. Sears' mail-order sales alone accounted for over 2 percent of the nation's total farm cash income in 1925.

While the industry was dominated by these two companies, Chicago was home to hundreds of other businesses, large and small, that published catalogs to advertise merchandise ranging from bicycles, roller skates, prefabricated houses and furniture, suits, furs and veterinary supplies, all available for delivery by mail. Most were specialty manufacturers that produced a narrow range of products, such as the Albaugh-Dover Company, which manufactured gears, tractors, cream separators, washing machines, and furniture from its factory at 21st and Marshall Boulevard, designed by Howard Van Doren Shaw and constructed in 1905. The Hartman Company, which sold furniture by mail from its central depot on Wentworth Avenue, filled about $13 million in orders per year by the early 1920s. However, some larger mail-order companies such as the Chicago Mail-order Company (renamed Aldens in the 1930s), established in 1889, offered a wider range of offerings and operated successfully in the shadow of the city's mail-order giants. Chicago was also a center for the publishing industry, in large part because of the mail-order business. Although Spiegel entered the mail-order business relatively late in comparison to many Chicago businesses, by the end of World War II the company would grow to be the third largest mail-order concern operating in the nation, with over 10,000 employees and annual sales of $133 million.

CHICAGO'S CENTRAL MANUFACTURING DISTRICT

The development of Chicago's Central Manufacturing District was both a reaction to and symptom of the peripheral migration of industrial development that occurred in urban areas throughout the country during the late 19th and early 20th century. With the exception of the lumber and meat packing industries (which had always been located on the edge of the city), most early 19th -century manufacturing in Chicago initially clustered close to the city's central business district.





The Spiegel Administration Building is located in the original East Tract of the Central Manufacturing District (CMD), located in the Bridgeport neighborhood at the geographic center of Chicago. The 400-acre district was developed by the Chicago Junction Railway and opened in 1908 as one of the first planned industrial districts in the United State. By 1915 over 200 firms were established in the district; tenants in the District included many well known companies, such as the William Wrigley, Jr. Company, Ford Motor Company, United (Rexall) Drug Company, and Spiegel. By the 1930s, the district had spread to include four additional tracts, including a development at Pershing Road and one at Kedzie Avenue, just west of the original East Tract.

Top: The Central Manufacturing District logo. Middle: Aerial view of the original East Tract of the CMD in 1915. Bottom: Map of the CMD developments, 1937.

Space quickly became an issue, as modern production technologies resulted in factories and facilities with exacting and large site requirements. By the late 19th century, rapidly-expanding large-scale industries and auxiliary manufacturers were choosing to locate farther afield from the central district in peripheral locations along the rail lines, where they had easy access to freight and shipping facilities and the luxury of space to expand operations as needed. The CMD, unlike the more distant industrial communities of Clearing and Pullman, represented a more strategic movement from the downtown, with an organized and clearly planned industrial development that was still dependent on the city's municipal labor pools, power, services, and transportation systems.

The CMD is located primarily within the Chicago community of Bridgeport, which began in 1836 as a town along the northern terminus of the Illinois & Michigan Canal. Lumber yards, manufacturing plants, and packinghouses opened along the river and the canal, attracting Irish, German, and Norwegian workers to the area. By the time the community was annexed into Chicago in 1863, Bridgeport was a thriving industrial center. In 1865, the Union Stock Yard opened just south of Bridgeport and the Union Rolling Mill began operation on the south branch of the Chicago River. Both of these establishments would remain major employers for Bridgeport residents well into the 20th century and set the stage for the later development of the Central Manufacturing District.

The Central Manufacturing District began as an outgrowth of the Chicago Union Stockyards. The Chicago Junction Railway and Union Stockyards Company had purchased the stockyards in 1890 and added new freight yards, a Union Freight Station, and modern locomotives. These improvements resulted in an excess of railroad capacity that the stockyards alone could not satisfy, and the Chicago Junction Railway began to look for ways to increase tonnage along its lines. After determining that the area around 35th Street and the South Branch of the Chicago River, home to a declining lumber trade, was geographically well-suited to their needs, the Railway acquired the small lumbering spurs that existed there and began buying parcels of land around their new lines. By 1908, the Chicago Junction Railway had acquired all of the land between 35th Street and 39th Street, from Morgan Street west to Ashland Avenue, approximately 400 acres total, which was christened the Central Manufacturing District of Chicago. J. A. Spoor (Chairman of the Chicago Junction Railway Board of Directors) and Arthur G. Leonard were named Trustees of the District; H. E. Poronto, the company's Vice President and Secretary, became the District's Industrial Agent.

The Central Manufacturing District was unlike any other industrial development operating at that time in the country. The property of the District was held by the trustees and covered by a bond issue. Proceeds from the sale of bonds were used to finance permanent improvements. The District trustees developed an attractive system of tenant services and introduced a comprehensive building program headed by a full-time staff of architects and engineers. It was this highly-developed system of construction and tightly controlled and regulated land use that distinguished the Central Manufacturing District as a planned industrial park and not simply a real estate operation. According to historian Frances Porter Alexander:

> The process of building the C.M.D. epitomized the concentrated managerial control which the trustees exerted over all other facets of the district's program. Site preparation, traffic planning, design and construction, and financial services all emanated from a central architectural and engineering department or, in the case of contractual arrange-

> ments, from the trustees. The system of construction services developed by the C.M.D. became a distinguishing feature of the modern industrial park of the post World War II era…From its earliest period of development, the C.M.D. employed architects and engineers to oversee all phases of site preparation and building construction. Although some manufacturers contracted the design of their plants to outside architects or engineers, all construction was required to conform to Central Manufacturing District standards.

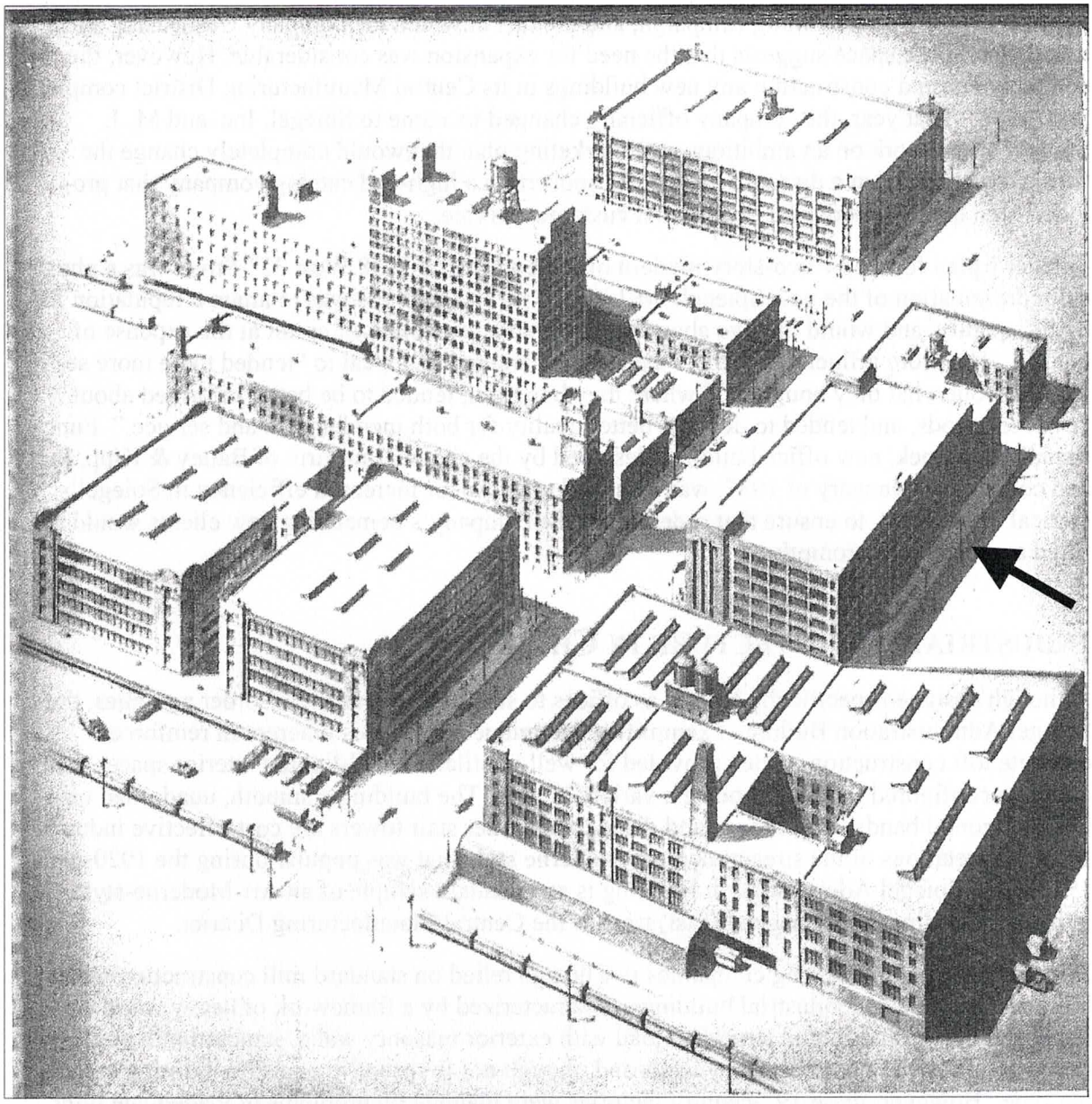
Like the Union Stockyards, the District had its own bank and maintained a private club for business executives of the district, both housed in a classical building constructed in 1912 on West 35th Street. Every detail, down to the design of lamp posts and the landscaping of parkways and common areas, was carefully considered.

Aesthetic considerations aside, the primary advantages of the Central Manufacturing District were its location in the geographical center of Chicago, its accessibility by various means of transport, and its proximity to large pools of skilled and unskilled labor. Every building in the district had its own switch track connecting to the Chicago Junction Railway, which in turn connected directly to every trunk line railroad that entered Chicago. Forty-eight percent of Chicago's population lived within a four-mile radius of the District, making it a "mecca for the unemployed." The District was a tremendous success from its inception, attracting firms from other parts of the city and new businesses in the Chicago market. The variety of businesses in the District was impressive and included producers of cooper's stock, iron, steel and metal products, coal, glass, chemicals, cotton oil, wool, paper, pianos, furniture, medicine, automobiles, nails, tiles, biscuits, beer, sausage casings, and chewing gum. By 1915 over 200 firms were established in the district; tenants in the District included many well known companies, such as the William Wrigley, Jr. Company, Ford Motor Company, United (Rexall) Drug Company, Pullman Couch Company, Pacific Lumber Company, Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, and Spiegel, May, Stern and Company.

The success of the initial CMD development prompted the trustees to develop additional parcels. By the late-1930s, the district had expanded to include four separate tracts—the Original East District, the Pershing Road Development between Ashland and Western Avenues, the Kedzie Development west of Kedzie Avenue along 47th Street, and the sprawling 380-acre Crawford Development west of Crawford Avenue (now Pulaski Road) and north of 47th Street. A fifth tract along 43rd Street was developed after World War II. In the post-war period, the CMD extended its influence beyond the city, developing industrial parks across the metropolitan area, including Calumet, Itasca, St. Charles, and Aurora.

The Spiegel Complex in the Central Manufacturing District

Each building that Spiegel built along 35th Street in the Central Manufacturing District represented a milestone in the company's business operations. The 1907 office and warehouse at 1061-1100 West 35th Street marked the beginning of the newly formed Spiegel, May, Stern and Company mail-order enterprise. The 1911 warehouse at 1040 West 35th Street represented the company's expansion into clothing and other new products, and the expansion of the 1907 warehouse in 1915 and 1916 reflected the success of the Martha Lane Adams fashion line. The company continued to expand its physical presence in the Central Manufacturing District during the 1920s and early 1930s by taking over existing buildings along 35th Street, including the John Magnus & Company Buildings at 1041 to 1059 West 35th Street and the Alfred Pick & Company Building at 1200 West 35th Street. The successes of the mid-1930s gave Spiegel am-



At the peak of Spiegel's success in the 1950s, the company occupied eleven buildings in the Central Manufacturing District, making it the largest single tenant in the district. This composite illustration of Spiegel's complex of buildings was published in the *Central Manufacturing District Magazine* in 1950. The Spiegel Administration Building is at the center right of the image (see arrow).

ple funding for a new building campaign, and the rate at which the company was leasing additional warehouse space suggests that the need for expansion was considerable. However, the company resisted constructing any new buildings in its Central Manufacturing District complex until 1936. That year, the company officially changed its name to Spiegel, Inc. and M. J. Spiegel began work on an ambitious new marketing plan that would completely change the firm's direction, from a discount mail-order concern to a high-end catalog company that provided high quality goods and exceptional customer service.

Spiegel's plan for a new two-story modern office building at 1038 West 35th Street was a physical representation of the new Spiegel. M.J.'s goal for the business was to attain a reputation for higher quality, and would involve abandoning the sole promotion of credit at the expense of quality. The more affluent customers that Spiegel wanted to appeal to "tended to be more selective about what they bought and where they bought it, tended to be better informed about customer goods, and tended to demand better quality for both merchandise and service." Functionally, the sleek, new office building, designed by the engineering firm of Battey & Kipp, Inc. and competed in January of 1937, was designed to allow for increased efficiency in Spiegel's clerical department, to ensure that orders from the company's demanding new clients would be filled and delivered promptly.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHITECTURE IN CHICAGO

Although designed specifically for use as offices to support Spiegel's mail-order activities, the Spiegel Administration Building exemplifies the unique advantages inherent in reinforced-concrete loft construction, which provided for well-ventilated, well-lighted interior spaces that could be configured to accommodate a variety of uses. The building's smooth, unadorned exterior, horizontal bands of windows, and distinctive corner stair towers are cost-effective industrial interpretations of the streamlined Art Moderne style that was popular during the 1920s and 1930s. The Spiegel Administration Building is an unusual example of an Art-Moderne-style industrial building in the original (east) tract of the Central Manufacturing District.

Prior to 1900, manufacturing companies in Chicago relied on standard mill construction when building factories and industrial buildings. Characterized by a framework of heavy wood columns and beams that shared structural load with exterior masonry walls, standard mill construction was capable of carrying heavy loads and, though not fireproof, was a slow-burning building type. However, these 19th-century factories were plagued by problems of inadequate light and ventilation.

The development of reinforced concrete in the late 1800s revolutionized factory design in Chicago and across the United States, and it became the primary material for multi-story factory construction after 1900. Buildings framed in reinforced concrete could accommodate more windows for maximum daylight than buildings made from wood or brick and were less costly to build, more fire-resistant and less susceptible to vibration from machinery. Early 20th-century reinforced-concrete loft buildings typically featured a framework of concrete columns and beams that provides structural support for the entire building, an exterior curtain wall of brick or concrete with large expanses of multi-light steel sash windows and brick or concrete spandrels, 12 to 14 foot ceilings and flat roofs. Reinforced-concrete loft structures typically

displayed a high degree of uniformity on both the exterior and the interior. They were rectangular in shape, with an exposed concrete skeleton, minimal ornament, repeated interior bays and expansive window walls.

By 1910, the development of flat-slab construction had further improved upon the reinforced-concrete framing system. Developed in 1905 by Minneapolis engineer C. A. P. Turner, flat-slab construction eliminated the girders and beams from concrete framing and allowed for walls that were made primarily of glass. This would become the preferred method for industrial building after 1920, because the extra headroom permitted easy installation of electrical wiring and ducts for central heating and air-conditioning systems.

Because the Central Manufacturing District was developed during a time of tremendous advances in industrial construction, the buildings within the District, and those of the Spiegel complex in particular, reflected the evolution and standardization of factory design that occurred during the early decades of the 20th century. The first warehouse buildings built by Spiegel, May, Stern and Company, completed in 1907 and 1911, were standard mill construction with heavy timber framing, structural masonry walls, and pared-down exterior detailing. However, the company's 1907 two-story office building was built using the new technology of reinforced-concrete framing, which the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company labeled as "fireproof construction." The 1915 warehouse addition was the first structure built by Spiegel that utilized the new flat-slab construction techniques, with concrete posts and floors supporting brick curtain walls. By the time the company began the first phase of its modern administration building at 1038 West 35th Street, flat- slab construction was the accepted means of construction for industrial loft buildings in the city. The flat-slab method also allowed the company to install central air conditioning in the building when the four-story addition was completed in 1941-42.

Like many industrial buildings built during the first half of the 20th century, the Spiegel Administration Building was designed by firms whose primary focus was engineering, not architecture. With the increasing complexity of many manufacturing processes and the use of new structural materials in the early 20th century, factory design increasingly became the domain of engineers. In *The Works: Industrial Architecture in the United States*, historian Betsy H. Bradley writes that as industrial engineering emerged as a specialized field at the turn of the century, "industrial engineers promoted themselves as uniquely qualified to provide efficient plans for [industrial buildings]....In addition to the placement of machinery, plant layout addressed the comfort of workers by planning for abundant light, sufficient heat, good ventilation, adequate space for their work, and convenient toilets and washrooms." Although the Spiegel Administration Building was not technically used for manufacturing or strictly "industrial" purposes, these basic tenants of a good industrial building were just as useful for ensuring that the thousands of clerks and office workers at Spiegel could work efficiently and effectively to process orders and respond to the customer's needs.

THE ART MODERNE ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

From a design perspective, the Spiegel Administration Building emphasized that Spiegel was a modern company with a modern aesthetic. The building's exterior, with clean, sharp lines formed by bands of steel windows and vertical columns of glass block, epitomized the Art

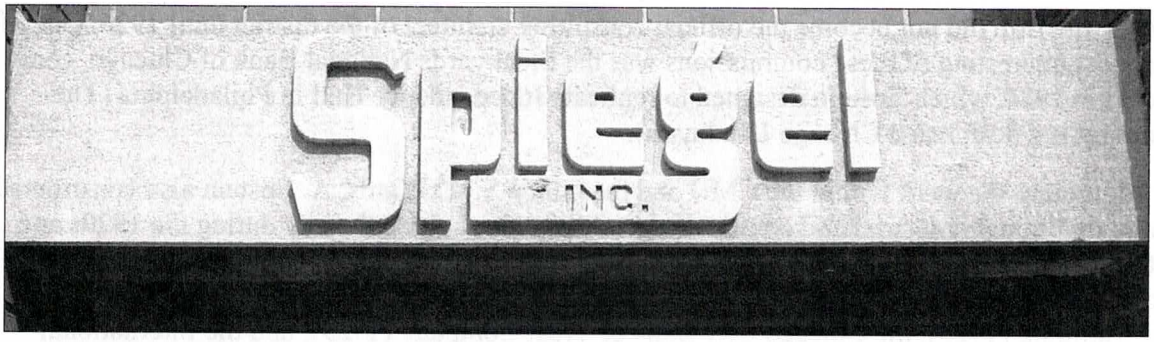
Moderne architectural style. The architecture of Spiegel's new building was especially noticeable in the original east tract of the Central Manufacturing District, where almost all of the buildings were constructed prior to 1920 and featured traditional brick veneers and decorative terra-cotta detailing that concealed the modern methods used in their construction. M. J. Spiegel's attempts to portray Spiegel, Inc. as a modern company was not limited to architecture. In the late 1930s, he hired Maholy-Nagy, an artist and member of the influential Bauhaus School who had fled Germany for Chicago to escape the Nazis, as a consultant on design and styling for the company's catalogs. Although Maholy-Nagy's recommendations, which included pop-up pictures for the furniture section, were never implemented, the experiment did prove M. J.'s desire to update and refine Spiegel's corporate image.

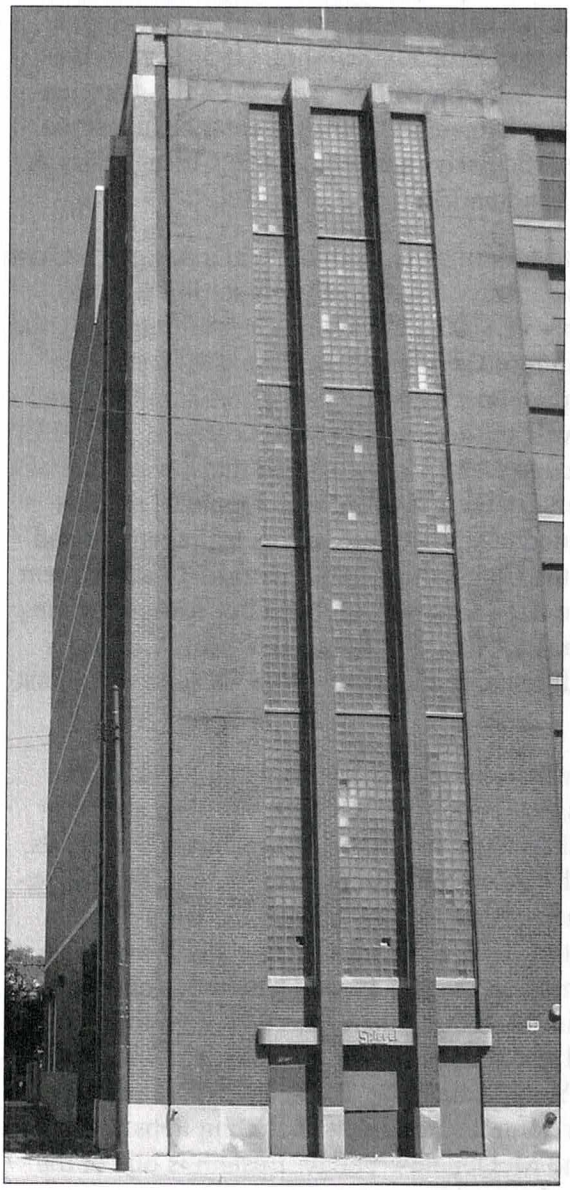
The Art Moderne style of architecture arose during the 1930s in reaction to the ornamental Art Deco style and as a reflection of the austere economic climate brought on by the Great Depression. The style was influenced not only by the rise of specialized industrial design in America but also by the rise of European Modernism and the growing recognition of the International Style of architecture practiced by Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe. The Art Moderne structures constructed throughout the country during the 1930s and into the 1940s were designed to express technology and function above all else. Ornamentation was eschewed in favor of clean lines and uncluttered surfaces. Buildings featured long horizontal lines and often incorporated curved elements to suggest an aerodynamic quality and a sense of motion. Glass block elements and large expanses of windows created a sense of transparency and lightness.

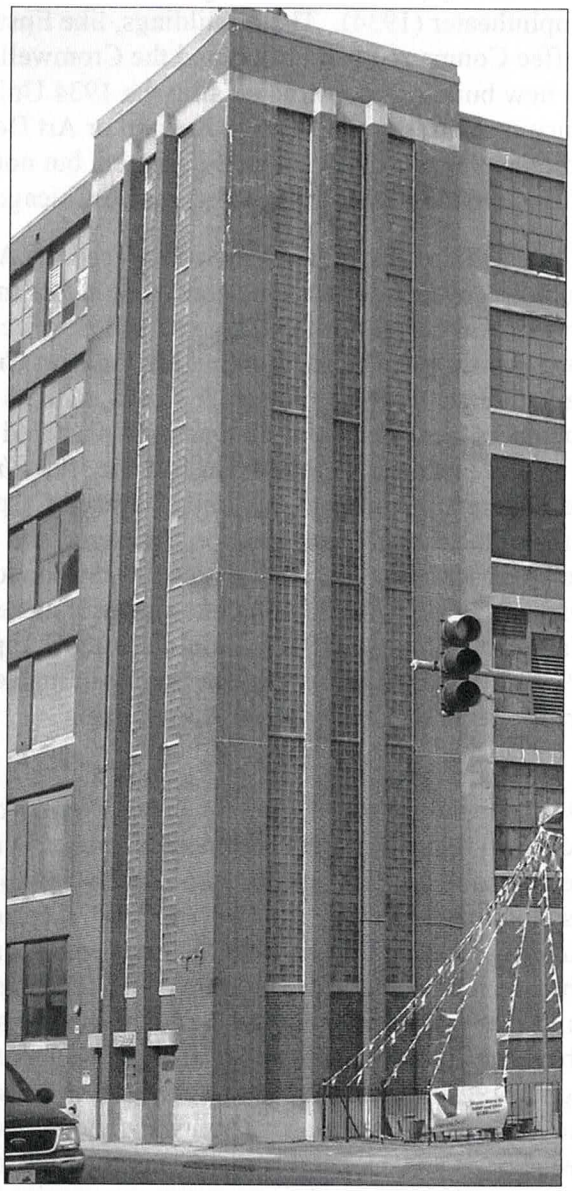
As historian Martin Greif notes in *Depression Modern: The Thirties Style in America,* the widespread acceptance of the streamlined modern aesthetic, which was embraced not only by architects but by designers of everyday objects ranging from clocks and radios to cars and household appliances, "marked probably the first time...in America in which the purely functional was made to appear beautiful" and designers realized "the decorative inherent in the functional." According to Greif, in no other place was this truer than in American industry, which produced the machine itself and provided the purest expression of the machine "in its architectural counterpart, the factory."

Abraham Epstein (1887-1958)

Some of the best examples of Art Moderne-style industrial buildings in Chicago were designed between 1935 and 1942 by Abraham Epstein, the Russian-born engineer who designed the 1941 -1942 addition to the Spiegel Administration Building and who served as the consulting architect for the Central Manufacturing District and the Union Stock Yards from 1926 through the 1950s. Epstein was born in Russia in 1887 and immigrated to Chicago in 1906. After graduating from the University of Illinois with a degree in engineering in 1911, Epstein worked for a variety of firms—including Western Electric, the National Fireproofing Company, and the architectural firm of Marshall & Fox—before joining the firm of S. Scott Joy, the first consulting architect for the Central Manufacturing District. Epstein worked under Joy until 1921 before leaving to form his own office, known simply as A. Epstein. Architect William H. P. Owen and engineer Joseph Brandstetter also left Joy's office to join Epstein's new firm; Owen would serve as the primary architect for most of the company's projects through the 1950s. Although Epstein's office was located within the district at 2011 West Pershing Road, and he was commissioned to design several buildings for the CMD and the Union Stockyards during the early







The Spiegel Administration Building's austere exterior, with clean lines formed by bands of steel windows and vertical columns of glass block, epitomized the Art Moderne architectural style.

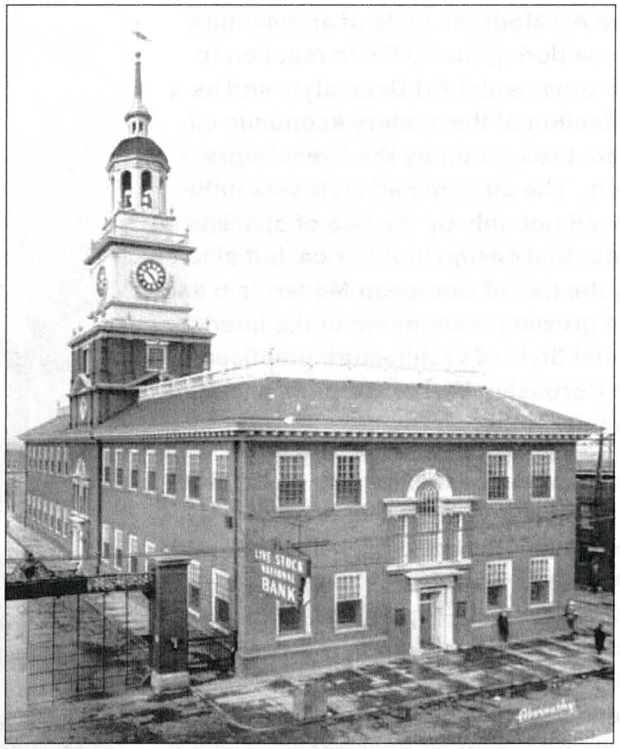
Top: Concrete lintel above southwest entrance. Bottom left and right: Corner stair towers with glass block detailing.

1920s, the firm did not become the official consulting architect of the district until 1926. One of the most interesting of these commissions was the Stockyards National Bank of Chicago, completed in 1924, which Epstein designed to replicate Independence Hall in Philadelphia (The building is a designated Chicago Landmark).

In addition to the work within the CMD and the Union Stock Yards, A. Epstein also constructed many traditional industrial and commercial buildings throughout the city during the 1920s and into the mid-1930s, including the City Furniture Company Building (1922), the J.S. Hoffman Company Building (1922), the Independent Casing Company Building (1923) the Klee Brothers' Building (1925), the Chicago City Bank & Trust Company (1929), and the International Amphitheater (1934). These buildings, like Epstein's CMD designs for the Maxwell House Coffee Company Plant (1927) and the Cromwell Paper Company Building (1933), as well as the new buildings constructed after the 1934 Union Stock Yards fire, were all multi-story masonry structures with Classical Revival or Art Deco ornamentation in terra cotta or limestone, which were well-built and well-designed, but not particularly innovative (The Chicago City & Trust Company Building is a designated Chicago Landmark).

After 1935, however, A. Epstein embraced the Art Modern style, and the firm's designs became much more streamlined. The commission that most clearly reflected this transition was the firm's 1936 design for the Caspers Tin Plate Factory at 4100 42nd Street. The building, only the third factory to be constructed within the later Crawford Development of the CMD, stood in stark contrast to Epstein's earlier works, with its sprawling, low-lying footprint, uninterrupted ribbons of steel-sash windows, smooth plastered wall surfaces, and rounded corners. In 1953, over 15 years after its initial construction, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* noted that "every one of the 37 [manufacturing plants] that followed Caspers [in the Crawford development] reflects some of the thought, imagination, foresight, and good taste used by Caspers management and the architect in making such a notable addition to the Chicago industrial world." In subsequent years, A. Epstein would complete similarly austere Art-Moderne buildings in Chicago for the Walgreen Company (1937), Rival Packing Company (1939), and Sprague-Warner Company (1940). The Spiegel Administration Building addition, completed in 1942, was one of the last Art Moderne designs completed by Epstein.

In the years following World War II, A. Epstein (which became A. Epstein and Sons, Inc. in 1946) expanded its presence in Chicago and across the country, branching out from a strictly industrial focus with new commercial, educational and health-care projects. During the 1950s, the company secured commissions for its first high-rise structures in Chicago—the Twin Towers Apartments (1950), the Cabrini-Green Apartment Complex (1958), and the Borg-Warner Building (1959). Epstein's 1952 commission for the General Electric Office and Warehouse in Chicago represented another milestone for the company, as it developed a method for design-build that would be replicated by countless firms in the coming decades. Although founder Abraham Epstein died in 1958, his sons Raymond and Sidney continued to expand the firm during the 1960s and 1970s, opening offices in New York, California, Paris, Tel Aviv, London, and Warsaw and forming relationships with major commercial clients including Pepsi, Sara-Lee, Coca-Cola, General Mills, General Foods, and McDonalds. Today, Epstein is one of the largest engineering and construction companies in the world.

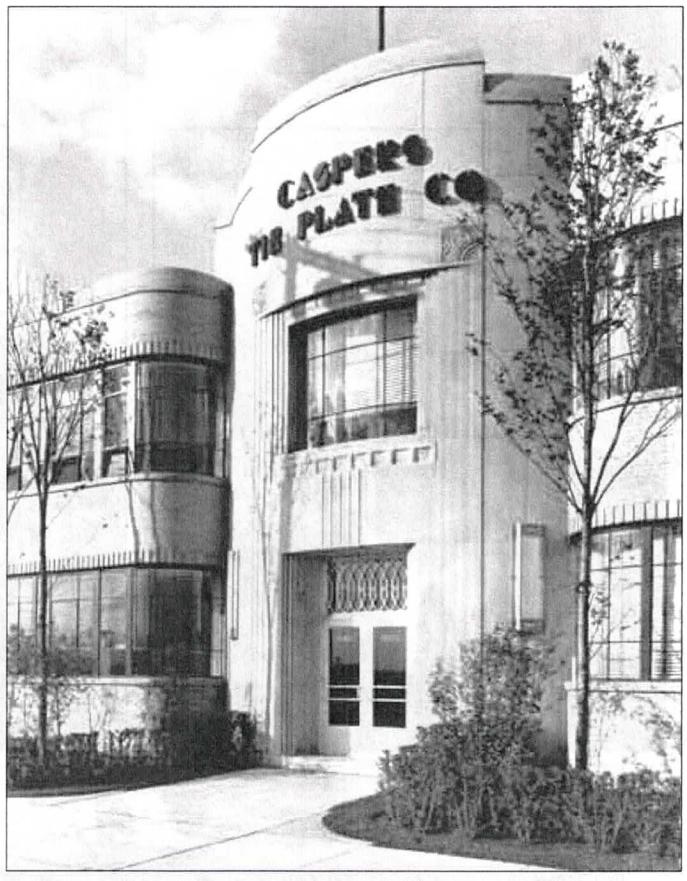


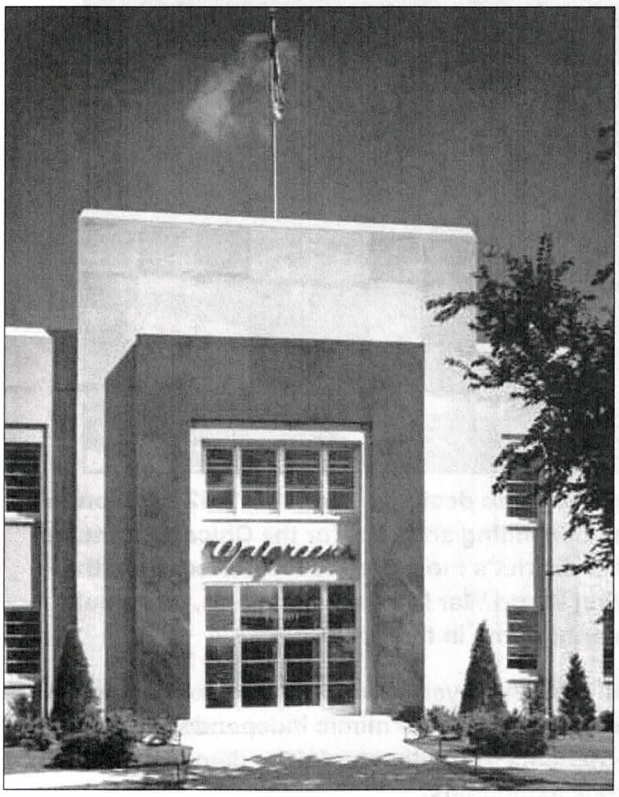
Russian-born architect and engineer Abraham Epstein, who designed the 1941-1942 addition to the Spiegel Administration Building, served as the consulting architect for the Chicago Manufacturing District and the Union Stockyards during the district's most productive period, from the mid-1920s through the 1950s. In the years following World War II, Epstein and Son, Inc. would become one of the largest and well-known engineering firms in the world.

Top left: Abraham Epstein (1887-1958). Top right: The Stockyards National Bank of Chicago (a designated Chicago Landmark), which Epstein designed in 1924 to mimic Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Bottom: Epstein designed the International Amphitheater (1934, demolished) to house the Union Stockyard's International Livestock exhibitions.

The Art Moderne style of architecture arose during the 1930s in reaction to the ornamental Art Deco style and as a reflection of the austere economic climate brought on by the Great Depression. The streamlined style was influenced not only by the rise of specialized industrial design in America, but also by the rise of European Modernism and the growing recognition of the International Style of architecture practiced by Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe.

Some of the best examples of Art Moderne-style industrial buildings in Chicago were designed between 1935 and 1950 by A. Epstein. Extant examples (clockwise from top right) include the Casper Tin Plate Company Building (1936) in the CMD's Crawford Development, the Sprague-Warner Company Building (1940) on Sacramento Avenue in Humboldt Park, and the Walgreens Company Headquarters at 4300 West Peterson Avenue (1947).





CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sec. 2-120-620 and -630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a preliminary recommendation of landmark designation for a building, structure, or district if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for landmark designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity. The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Spiegel Administration Building be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City's History

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois or the United States.

- The Spiegel Administration Building is the best remaining building from the substantial complex of warehouses, administrative and office buildings that served as the national headquarters of Spiegel, Inc., one of the country's most innovative and successful mail-order businesses from the founding of the company's mail-order division in 1907 until the early 1990s.

- The Spiegel Administration Building exemplifies Chicago's development as a nationwide center for mail-order retail during the late 19th and early 20th century. Chicago's central location and unparalleled access to national railroad networks allowed goods to be delivered cheaply and efficiently to far-flung rural communities, and the city was home to the three largest mail-order companies in the world—Montgomery Ward; Sears, Roebuck & Company, and Spiegel. By the end of World War II, Spiegel employed over 10,000 workers and boasted annual sales of $133 million.

- The Spiegel Administration Building, located on 35th Street in the heart of the original east tract of Chicago's Central Manufacturing District (CMD), is a tangible reminder of the CMD's importance as one of the first planned industrial districts in the United States. During the 1910s and 1920s, many of the city's major manufacturing concerns, including the William Wrigley, Jr. Company, Ford Motor Company, United (Rexall) Drug Company, Pullman Couch Company, Pacific Lumber Company, and Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company leased space and constructed buildings within the CMD. Spiegel was one of the first companies to move its operations into the District's original east tract, and would eventually become the largest single tenant in the District, with over 2,500,000 square feet of space in eleven buildings.

Criterion 4: Important Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- The Spiegel Administration Building, designed and constructed in two phases by the engineering firms of Battey & Kipp and A. Epstein, is an excellent example of an Art Moderne-style industrial building in Chicago, and is one of the only examples of modern-style indus-

trial design in the original tract of the Central Manufacturing District. The building's clean-lined facades, with large expanses of steel-sash windows, undecorated brick surfaces, and prominent corner towers accented with vertical ribbons of glass block, epitomize the streamlined aesthetic of the Art Moderne style.

- The Art Moderne design of the Spiegel Administration Building served as a physical representation of an ambitious new marketing plan that transformed Spiegel's image from a discount mail-order concern to a high-end catalog company that provided high quality goods and exceptional customer service. The new sleek office building showed customers that Spiegel was a modern company with a modern aesthetic.

Criterion 5: Important Architect

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.

- Abraham Epstein, noted Chicago industrial engineer and architect, designed and constructed the 1941-1942 addition to the Spiegel Administration Building. Epstein served as the consulting architect for the Chicago Manufacturing District during its most productive period, from the mid-1920s through the 1950s.

- In the 1920s and early 1930s, Epstein's firm designed the Stockyards National Bank Building and the Chicago City Bank & Trust Building, both designated Chicago Landmarks.

- His firm, A. Epstein, was responsible for many of the best Art Moderne industrial structures constructed in Chicago during the 1930s and early 1940s. In the years following World War II, Epstein and Son, Inc. would become one of the largest and well-known engineering firms in the world.

Integrity

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.

The Spiegel Administration Building at 1038 West 35th Street retains its integrity of feeling, association, location, setting, workmanship, and design. The building continues to convey its historic character as an excellent example of a flat-slab reinforced-concrete construction industrial loft building designed in the Art Moderne style. The exterior of the building, including the brick curtain walls with steel-sash, multi-light windows and the corner stair towers with glass block, remains largely as it was in 1942. A number of the original steel windows have been replaced, particularly on the south façade. The west elevation, which was originally a shared wall with the now-demolished 1911 Spiegel warehouse building, has been covered with a red-brick veneer. Typical of flat- slab construction, the interiors are open, unfinished spaces supported by flared concrete columns.

SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever a building is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its preliminary evaluation of the Spiegel Administration Building, the Commission staff recommends that the significant historical and architectural features of the building be identified as:

- All exterior elevations, including rooflines, of the building.

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Central Manufacturing District Magazine, various articles from 1937 –1950. Reproduced with permission from the Chicago History Museum: cover page (bottom left) and pp.8 (middle, bottom left and right), 10 (top and middle), 11 (all), 18 (all), and 21.

Chicago Department of Zoning and Land Use Planning, Historic Preservation Division: pp.15 (top left), 16 (bottom right).

Cornell, James Jr. *The People Get the Credit*: *The First One Hundred Years of the Spiegel Story*: p 8 (top left).

www.epsteinglobal.com: pp.27 and 28 (all).

MacRostie Historic Advisors: cover page (top, bottom right), pp, 3 (top), 4, 5, and 25 (all).

Original blueprints courtesy of Epstein: p. 10 (bottom).

Various internet web sites: pp. 15 (bottom left and right), 16 (top, bottom left).

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